

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

April 21, 2016



Planning Variance case no. PV 16-03: Greater Galilee Baptist Church

CASE DESCRIPTION: a request for approval of a 5-foot variance from the minimum 15-foot side building setback that is generally required from property lines adjacent to local streets, to allow a proposed building addition to an existing 1-story church building which is planned to extend within 10 feet from the side property line along N. Logan Avenue

LOCATION: 804 N. Logan Avenue, at the southwest corner of the intersection of W. 18th Street and N. Logan Avenue, being Lot 6 in Block 201 of the Bryan Original Townsite

ZONING: Residential District – 5000 (RD-5)

EXISTING LAND USE: church

APPLICANT: Greater Galilee Baptist Church – Cedric Johnson

STAFF CONTACT: Stephanie Doland - Staff Planner

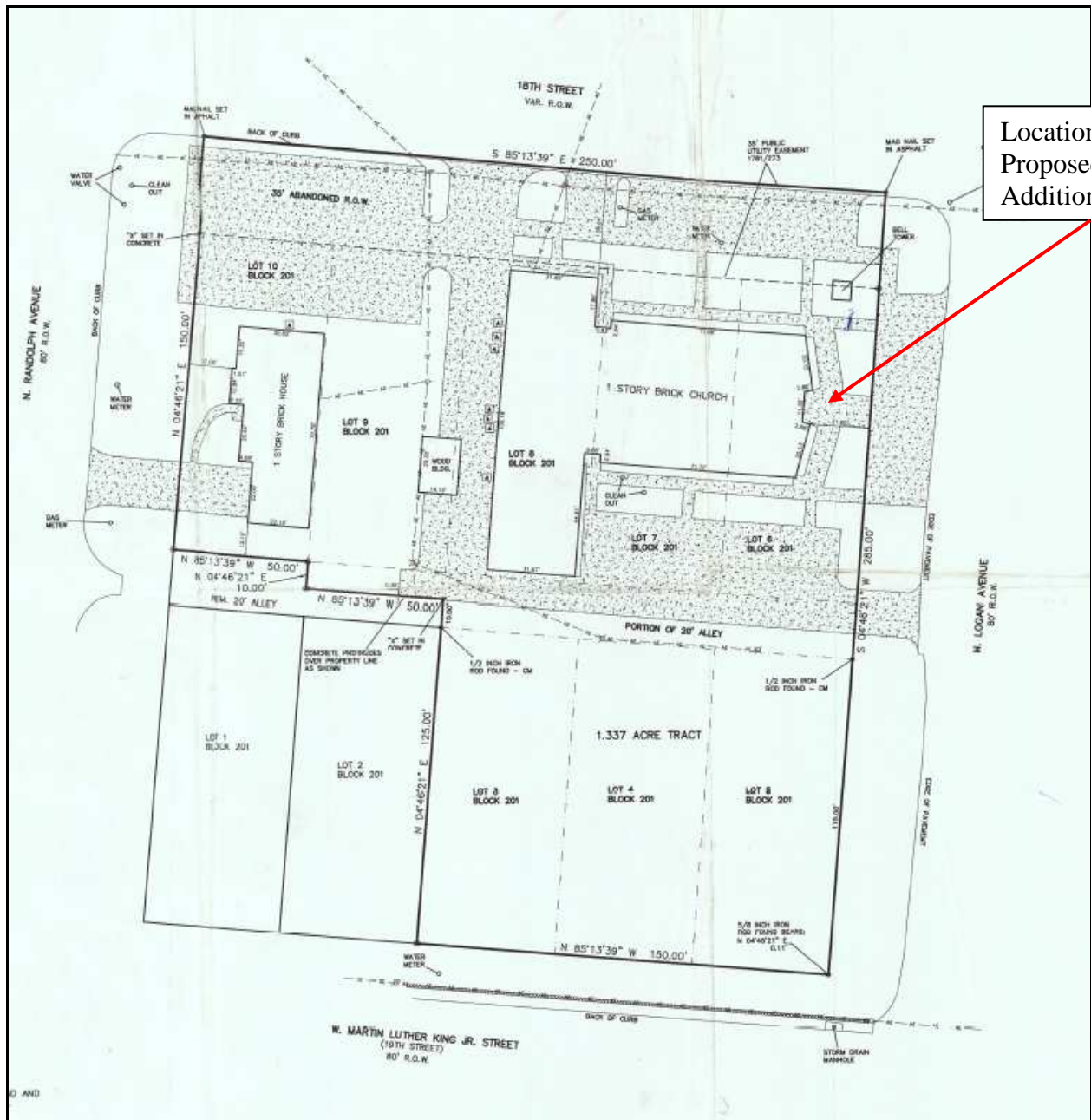
SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approving** the requested variance.



AERIAL IMAGE (2015):



EXISTING SITE PLAN:



EXISTING STREET VIEW:

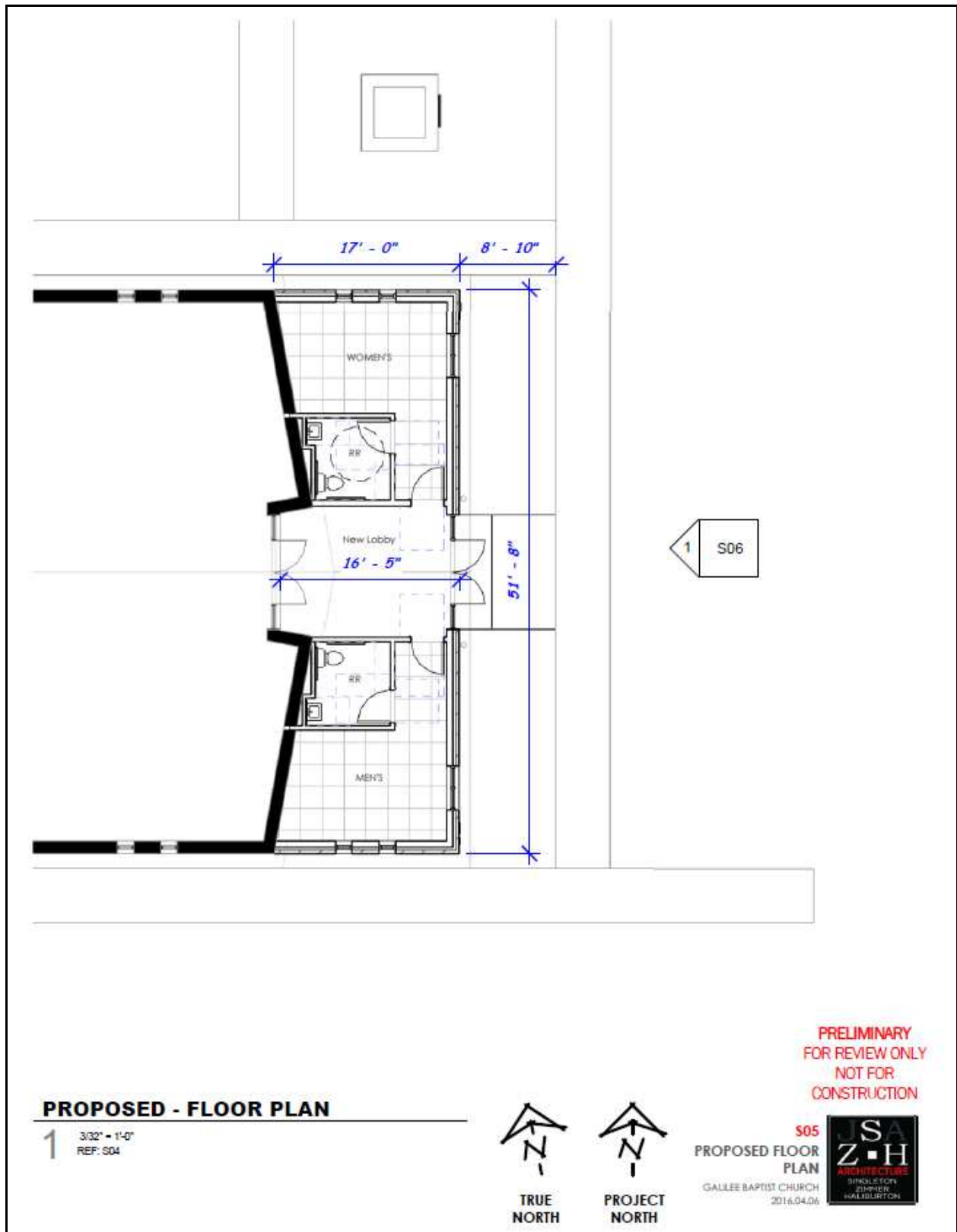


Street View from Logan Avenue

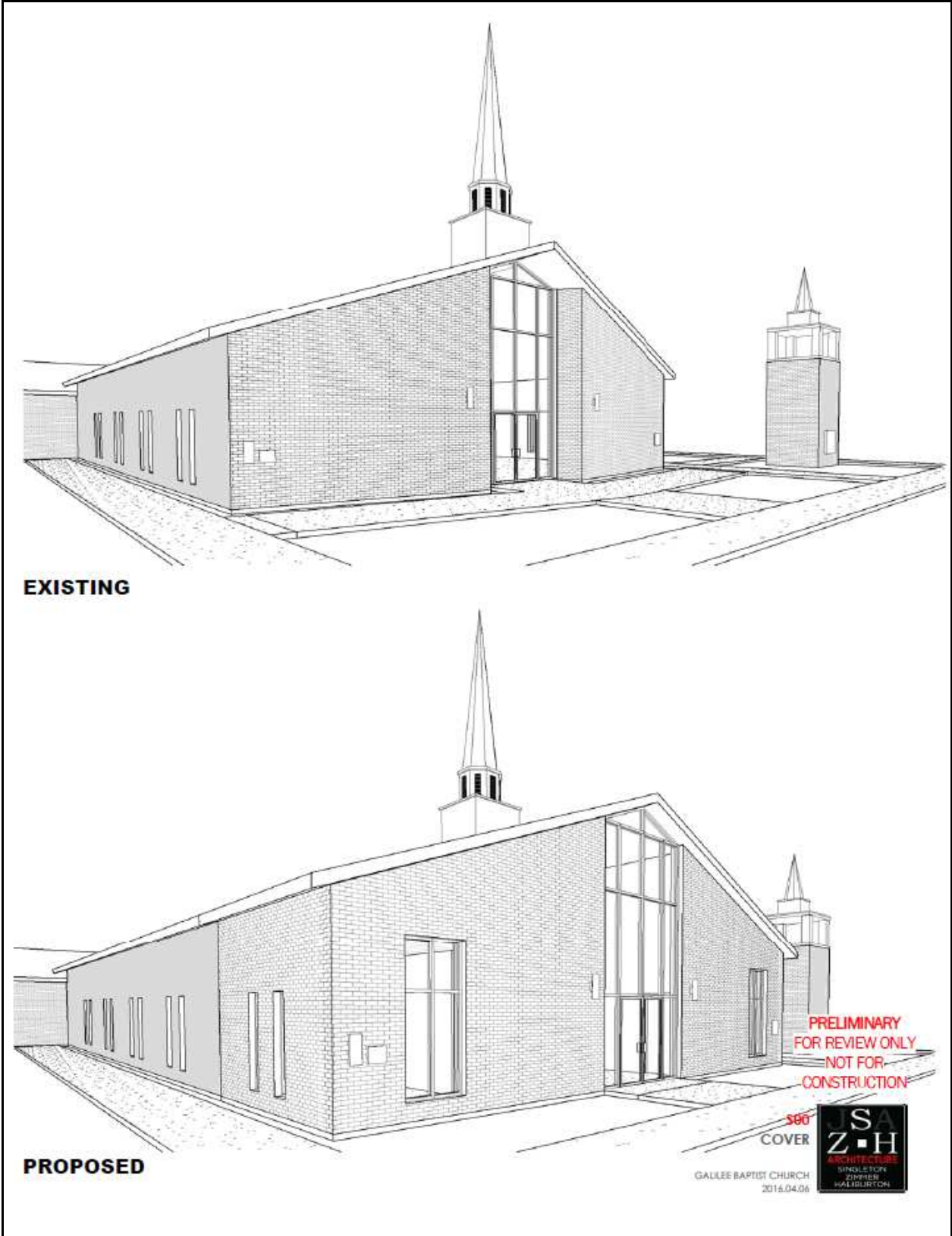


Street View from West 18th Street

PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



BUILDING ELEVATIONS



BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located in the middle of an older residential neighborhood of central Bryan at the southwest corner of W. 18th Street and North Logan Avenue. The building was constructed in 1980 and purchased by Greater Galilee Baptist Church in 1994. The applicant, Cedric Johnson on behalf of Greater Galilee Baptist Church, is requesting a 5-foot variance from the minimum 15-foot side building setback along North Logan Avenue.

Both W. 18th Street and North Logan Avenue are classified as local streets. North Logan Avenue right-of-way is 80 feet wide and has a pavement width of 25 feet. Similarly, W 18th Street right-of-way is 42 feet wide and has a pavement width of 30+ feet. Current street design standards require only 50 feet of right-of-way and 27 feet pavement widths for local streets.

The subject property is zoned Residential District – 5000 (RD-5). RD-5 zoning requires buildings to be set back a minimum of 15 feet from side property lines on corner lots where that side property line adjoins a side street. The one-story brick Church building faces West 18th Street and in its current configuration abides by all building setbacks. Located along the front of the property, parallel to West 18th street, there is a 35-foot Public Utility Easement and the church is constructed 35+ feet back from the edge of pavement of W 18th Street. Along North Logan Avenue the current structure is built 21 feet back from the side property line, and 40+ feet back from the edge of pavement of N Logan Avenue.

ANALYSIS:

The Planning and Zoning Commission may authorize a variance from minimum building setback standards stipulated in the Land and Site Development Ordinance. No variance shall be granted unless the Planning and Zoning Commission finds that all of the following criteria are met:

1. That the granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the area (an area encompassing approximately a 200-foot radius);

Staff contends that granting the requested variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the area. The subject property is adjacent to a single-family home to the west (owned by Greater Galilee Baptist Church) and north (across W 18th Street), another Church to the east (across N Logan Avenue), and vacant church land to the south. In this particular case, the subject property is located in the middle of an older residential district and adjoined by N Logan Avenue a local street with an extraordinarily (80-foot) wide right-of-way. 40+ feet separate the subject property's side property line from pavement along N Logan Avenue.

Staff believes that this extraordinarily wide, unimproved local right-of way segment that adjoin the subject property will continue to provide open space around the margin of this church for the foreseeable future. Approving the requested variance will therefore not be detrimental to the residential ambience of this older neighborhood of Bryan. The proposed addition to the church will align with the existing bell tower on the property, which is already set back only 10 feet from the property's side property line along N. Logan Avenue.

2. That the granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties abutting the subject property;

Staff contends that granting the requested variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties abutting the subject property for the reasons described above.

3. That the hardships and difficulties imposed upon the owner/applicant are greater than the benefits to be derived by the general public through compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

The hardships and difficulties upon the owner to comply with the ordinance at this time will be much greater than the benefits derived by the public were the ordinance strictly enforced. The church is seeking this variance request to expand the lobby entrance and build two bathroom facilities at the front of the church. Strict compliance of the ordinance would require the redesign of the proposed church addition and would likely result in the greater loss of parking spaces and trees that surround the Church to the north and south. In this particular case, staff believes approving the requested variance is believed to have the most likely long-range benefit, balancing both public and private purposes.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approving the requested variance** to allow the construction of the proposed addition to build within 10 feet from the property's east side property line along North Logan Avenue.